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Educational Television Series 1968-69

Teachers' Guide

DEPT. OF EDUCATION
HISTORICAL COLLECTION

History SENIOR AND INTERMEDIATE DIVISIONS

The Thirties: Age of The Great Depression

Educational Television Branch
ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
1670 Bayview Avenue, Toronto 17

HISTORY*

THE THIRTIES: AGE OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Senior and Intermediate Divisions*

3 programs, 30 minutes each, and 1 program of 1 hour.

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Please send comments and inquiries to:

Assistant Superintendent,
Social Sciences,
Educational Television Branch,
1670 Bayview Avenue,
Toronto 17, Ontario.

*** Note: Designed by a special committee for students at the Grade 12 level, this series is also of special interest to students in Grades 10 and 13. While the committee had in mind that history classes would normally be the audience, preparations were made in such a way as to permit interdisciplinary studies. Students in English and art should find special opportunities for study and expression in this series.**

INTRODUCTION

These four programs on the Nineteen Thirties were planned with the individual in mind: both the individual who lived during the Thirties and the student who views the film. The purpose is to bring them together in such a way that a sense of the period is realized. Particular emphasis is given to the arts as a gauge of the atmosphere of the decade.

Because this particular era is only thirty years removed from today, your own community can still present a rich mine of available historical resources. We suggest that your students take advantage of this by contacting local newspapers, local radio and TV stations, local libraries, museums, art associations, or local people of note (and otherwise), who lived through the 1930's.

The ETV Branch is attempting to be of some assistance in this regard by supplying advance information concerning this series to the various media agencies in Ontario and by suggesting to them that they might participate actively in the project. We hope that many of the local newspapers, for example, would prepare special editions relating to the 1930's in their area, or reprint those of the era itself, or open files to students, and so on. If such local activity should take place, then the community as a whole would be participating in the formal educational process.

Special mention should be made about bibliography. In addition to the books listed in this guide, a more extensive bibliography has been compiled and sent to all secondary school libraries and public libraries. Teachers could confer with their librarian to choose those books on the list that are both suitable and available.

To help supply materials supportive of the television programs, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, in conjunction with the ETV Branch, has prepared a multi-media kit of 1930's material. It includes newspaper clippings, records of music and speeches, tapes, pictures, slides, biographies, and other relevant material. About two hundred of these kits will be distributed to secondary schools across the province. Certain of these schools will be reporting in depth to the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education on the utilization and impact of the kits. All schools are invited to report to the Educational Television Branch on their experiences using either the kit or the television programs, or both.

PROGRAM I

THE WINTER YEARS

The intent of this program is to provide an eye-witness account of the Thirties in the Canadian West, and to personalize this era.

PROGRAM CONTENT

James Gray discusses his life in Winnipeg during the years of keenest economic distress. At first as a young man on relief, and later as a reporter with the "Winnipeg Free Press", he was able to observe many aspects of the ordinary man's struggle with the times.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Analyze the Prairies in terms of important cities, population, economy, transportation, markets, climate, and susceptibility to recessions.

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss such aspects of the film as:
   - problems of the city-dweller
   - problems of the prairie farmer
   - significant western personalities
   - relationship between religion and politics
   - effect of western Canada on the Canadian scene.
2. Prepare a class book based on the experiences of parents and neighbours who lived during the Thirties.
3. Initiate projects on paintings, poetry, and novels which came out of the Thirties.
4. Dramatize some aspect of the Thirties.
5. The film by the National Film Board, "The Dust Bowl", would provide insights to this era.
6. Play Dvorak's "New World Symphony".
7. Do a project on soil conservation and farm management.
8. Interview as many older people as you can who lived through the Depression, and create an audio-mosaic of reminiscences of the 1930's.
9. Make a collection of photographs showing local or national poverty. If possible, take some of the photographs yourself and contrast them with the photographs of the 1930's.
10. A teenager in the Thirties would now be about forty-five years of age. How much influence on present day events do people of this age group have?

Bibliography

ALLEN, RALPH. *Ordeal by Fire: Canada 1910-1945.* Toronto: Doubleday, 1961.

BRAITHWAITE, MAX. *Why Shoot the Teacher.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965.

GRAY, JAMES H. *The Winter Years.* Toronto: Macmillan, 1966.

notes

PROGRAM 2

IMAGES OF AN ERA

The purpose of this program is to show the way people lived in the Thirties: their struggles and accomplishments, ideas and ideals, reactions to political philosophies and economic developments. It provides a cross-section of the decade, giving its cultural characteristics set in a mosaic style.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the major characteristics of the 1960's and see how many of them apply to the 1930's.
2. Discuss the difference between: individualism and socialism; idealism and pragmatism; privacy and publicity; dreams and reality. Relate these to developments in the 1930's.

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Debate the following resolution:
   "Fascism was a more successful force in Europe in the Thirties than democracy was in North America."
2. Projects could be carried out on the development and effects of the automobile, the film industry, the radio, or the airplane.
3. Conduct an analysis of unionism with reference to theory, problems, achievements, and reactions.
4. Artists depict their environment. Investigate the work of a novelist, poet, playwright or painter in the Thirties.
5. Discuss Picasso's "Guernica". Why did fascism appeal strongly to some Europeans and horrify others?
6. The books listed below reflect the experiences and mood of the Thirties:
   For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway
   It Can't Happen Here by Sinclair Lewis
   The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck.
7. Illustrated charts could be made showing the highlights of the period and significant characteristics.
8. Discuss the following:
   "Hollywood movies offered escapism during the 1930's, 40's, 50's, 60's, . . ."
   "In the 1930's, people could/could not see what was happening to their world."
9. Contact local newspapers, radio or TV stations, for additional impressions of the 1930's. Or, using as many visuals as possible, compare any of the following phenomena of the 1960's and the 1930's.
   Billy Graham and Amy Semple MacPherson
   George Wallace and Huey Long
   Trudeau and Bennett
   Sean Connery and James Cagney
   "Valley of the Dolls" and "Gone with the Wind"
   Expo '67 and World's Fair '39
   The hippie and the unemployed youth of the 1930's
   The Beatles and Benny Goodman.
10. Conduct an imaginary interview on tape with an upperclass socialite of the 1930's and ask him what he thinks ought to be done about the unemployed. Do the same thing (only a *real* interview this time) with an upperclass socialite of the 1960's. Contrast the two interviews.
11. Produce your own painting/sculpture/mobile/poem to convey the spirit of the 1930's.
12. Make a collage of 1930's newspaper clippings about any topic that interests you.

Bibliography

BARR, ALFRED H. *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art.* New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1946.

BIRD, CAROLINE. *The Invisible Scar.* New York: David McKay, 1966.

CASSOU, JEAN. *Picasso.* London: Oldburne Press, 1959.

FROMM, ERICH. *Escape from Freedom.* New York: Holt Rinehart Winston, 1941.

MORISON, SAMUEL ELIOT. *The Oxford History of the American People.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.

PRESTON, WISE & WERNER. *Men in Arms.* New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1956.

SHIRER, WILLIAM L. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960.

TAYLOR, A. J. P. *The Origins of the Second World War.* New York: Atheneum, 1962.

notes

PROGRAM 3

THE GRAPES OF WRATH

At the time of writing this guide, negotiations are proceeding for the right to broadcast this film, which features Henry Fonda and Jane Darwell. What follows is based on the assumption that satisfactory arrangements will be completed.

PROGRAM CONTENT

The film is based on John Steinbeck's famous novel of the Thirties which dealt with a dust bowl family's enforced migration to California in search of work in the orchards. It will be necessary for the viewer to make the distinction between the film being used, on the one hand, as a picture of life during the Great Depression, and on the other, as a document of the age, and an expression of the feeling and philosophy of an eminent American of this period. There should be ample stimulation to launch discussions of such topics as the condition of agriculture, the role of government, labour management relations, the feeling of helplessness that infused the times, and the impact of unemployment on the family.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Play a record of protest songs.
2. Discuss protest in the 1960's with reference to the forms of protest, its purpose, themes, effectiveness, reactions to it, the right to protest, and its importance.

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Analyze *The Grapes of Wrath* as a social protest and consider the impressions it would make on a Depression-oriented audience and a present day audience, as well as the use of other art forms as vehicles for social protest.
2. Compare *The Grapes of Wrath* with Clifford Odets' play *Waiting for Lefty,* and/or with Grant Woods' paintings.
3. To what extent do Steinbeck's novel and Odets' play represent an incitement to political activism comparable with some brands of present day activism?
4. Research, projects, debate, or discussion on: the way art reflects protest; water or air pollution; the crowded city and the mechanical man; the cinema and music, poverty and the social conscience then and now.

Bibliography

CARSON, RACHEL. *Silent Spring.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962.

HOCHHUTH, ROLF. *The Deputy.* New York: Grove Press, 1964.

PAUL, ELIOT. *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town.* Random House, 1942.

notes

PROGRAM 4

"EXPLANATIONS"

This program probes into the economic causes of the Depression, and the political "shapes" that appeared as a result. The discussion will be open-ended and, it is hoped, provocative.

PROGRAM CONTENT

A discussion is carried on by three learned individuals who represent three general degrees of political opinion: the Right, the Centre, and the Left. They analyze the Depression and the politics of the Thirties from their respective points of view.

SUGGESTED PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Select significant political figures in Canada, the United States and Europe in the Thirties and decide whether they represented the Right, Centre, or Left of political opinion.
2. Debate the following resolution:

   "The cause of the depression in the Thirties was not the stock market crash, but the fact that the American and world economy was basically sick."
3. Relative to the stock market crash in 1929, investigate the terms *buying on the margin, selling short, holding companies, stock pools.*

SUGGESTED POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Investigate the appearance of the Third Party Ticket in the 1930's, referring to Huey Long and Rev. Charles Coughlin

in the United States and William Aberhart, Tim Buck, Maurice Duplessis, and J.S. Woodsworth in Canada.

2. How much of Roosevelt's New Deal was new?
3. Projects, research, and discussion could be conducted on such subjects as:
   - successful fascist regimes in Europe
   - U.S. presidency compared with the Canadian prime ministry
   - U.S. Supreme Court — role and conflicts in the 1930's and now.
   - centralization in Canada in the 1930's and now
   - advertising; credit card; cash card.
4. Stage a Model Parliament.
5. View the feature film *All the King's Men,* distributed by Columbia Pictures, 72 Carleton Street, Toronto.
6. Discuss the following:

   Communism: the great failure of the 1930's.

   "The 1930's experience contributed in an extremely significant manner to the development of economic thought."
7. Compare the various explanations as to why the 1929 crash occurred.
8. Conduct an imaginary interview (on tape) with a wealthy businessman who has just lost everything in the crash.

Bibliography

BIRD, CAROLINE. *The Invisible Scar.* New York: David McKay, 1966.

GALBRAITH, J. K. *The Great Crash, 1929.* Pelican Books, 1966.

KEYNE, J.M. *Economic Consequences of the Peace.* New York: Harcourt Brace, 1920.

LEOPOLD, R.W. & LINK, A.S. *Problems in American History.* New York: Prentice-Hall, 1955.

LEUCHTENBURG, W. E. *Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal.* New York: Harper and Row, 1963.

SOME GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Using quotations from their public writings, compare Ezra Pound with Norman Bethune.
2. Compare the International style of architecture of the Thirties with the Victorian style.
3. Examine the apparent need of the 1930's for over-riding systems in politics, economics, and architecture.
4. Make an audio comparison between the rhetoric of Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler.
5. Use the following quotations to initiate discussion:

   "The Depression did not cause the emergence of the creative rebel (Norman Bethune, Frank Lloyd Wright, Clifford Odets), but the times allowed them to flourish and to develop certain patterns of action."

   "The angry artists of the 1930's (Rivera, Orozco, etc.) were turning negative emotions such as hate and anger to positive uses".
6. Write a short story or poem to express the feeling of the regionalist painters of the 1930's.
7. Illustrate with visuals and audio extracts the trends in popular music during the 1930's, or create imaginative designs based upon its rhythms.
8. Compare: the jazz of the 1930's with the soul music of today; the love ballad of the 1930's with contemporary popular music.
9. Tape an imaginary interview with a Depression farmer who has just seen an exhibit of the paintings of Grant Wood.
10. Write an essay on The Artists' Congress.
11. Explain why fascism was more successful in Germany than in North America during the 1930's.
12. Collect source documents about the labour movement in your locality during the 1930's.
13. Prepare your own "Jackdaw" concerning your community's Depression experience.
14. Compare the actual Nazi takeover of Vienna with the situation described in Archibald MacLeish's radio play "The Fall of the City".
15. Compare the social reforms introduced in Germany in the 1930's with those introduced in the U.S.A. during the same period.
16. Attempt to explain Hitler's expansion into the Rhineland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland from the German point-of-view at the time.
17. Explain communist policy concerning the Spanish Civil War.
18. Discuss with the class whether it is easier to be a pacifist today than it was in the Thirties.
19. Tape an imaginary radio broadcast of an actual incident that occurred during this period or write and tape a radio broadcast which imaginatively suggests the prevailing atmosphere of the Depression era.
20. Explain why there seem to be few well-known criminals during the 1960's as compared to the 1930's.

notes

Scheduling for this series can be found in the monthly ETVO SCHEDULE sent to all teachers. For long-term planning, reference can be made to the ETV Schedule (Calendar), which lists programming from October to June and was mailed to all teachers, However, it is most important to check the monthly ETVO SCHEDULE for the last minute changes always involved in extensive programming.

THE THIRTIES: AGE OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION